

12-29-1861

## Letter to John Butler and Matilda Smith from Isaac Smith and Margaret Smith

Isaac Smith

Margaret Smith

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here that stiles them selfs Peace Democrats  
that are opposed to the war and always talking  
about its unconstitutionality and say the people  
of the south cant be conquered such stuff is  
all Moon shine and proceeds from a traitors  
Heart, if we have a government at all (which  
I believe we have) it is able to put down all  
internal stripes and rebellions let them come  
from North or South if it cant help change  
our form of government to one that can,  
I think it is high time for all Union  
Men to throw away party politticks and put  
there shoulder to the government wheel as one  
Man and never stop rolling it on till the  
stars and stripes waves over every foot  
of Soil with in these United States and  
and Territorys and say like old Hickory  
the Union must and shall be preserved  
they are trying to raise Regiment of Soldiers in  
Oregon I am afraid they will be thwarted in conse-  
quence of so many being at the mines and going  
I had made up my mind to stop the Monmouth  
Review on account of his opposition to the war  
but the last No that I got changed its tone  
and says it is in favor of prosecuting the  
war with vigor till peace is congerd That  
good doctrine. I must come to a close write  
Soon your brother & sister  
Isaac and Margaret Smith

Bridgeport Polk co December the 29<sup>th</sup> 1861  
Dear Sister  
Time dose not make me forget that  
that I have but one sister in a distant  
land and that death has deprived us of all  
our near relations and circumstances has separated  
us maybe for always I hope not notwithstanding  
we have a great consolation that is we can  
write to each other and learn how we are  
getting along this leaves us all well.  
The three oldest Bay is going to school at  
Monmouth they are all at home now a  
taking Christmas they have grown up to  
be quite large Bays Flora is about as large  
as her mother the rest of the children is fat  
and hearty running round in the snow  
the word snow will make you think that  
we have winter here as well as in Illinois  
it snowed about 3 inches deep a week ago  
it freezes in the night and thaws in  
day time we have had a great deal more  
rain here this winter than usual the  
willamette has been ten feet higher than  
ever known by white men it done  
a great deal of damage some say a million  
of dollars wouldnt make up the loss  
the greatest damage was done to towns on



the River some was entirely swept away a good many farms Buildings and stock was washed off and stock drowned. There was some lines lost not a great many that we have heard of a great <sup>many</sup> had bare heads escaped some staid in tree tops a day and night and a raining all the time there suffering most horribly great there is a great many entirely destitute they will have to depend on their neighbors for help. I think you had better take a notion to come and see us it is no trick to crop the plains in good company we have plenty to ware and eat and apples with out end besides I think you could enjoy your self. I must come to a close and write some to John you must write soon your Brother & Sister untill death

Isaac & Margaret Smith

Dear Brother

I have bin expecting to get a letter from you for a long time but I am disappointed I am so careless I must not complain this leaves us all well the connections are all well as far as I know except Alexander Davidson he has been sick about a year he is able to be about part of the time the complaint the Doctors say is the gravel he suffers a great deal your Mother was well the last I heard from here she has not bin here for a least two months she

looked well and hearty and seemed in good spirits she complains about you all not writing to her often. — you requested me to see all of the heirs and see if they was willing to release William for one years rent on the old place it was some time before I could see them all or I should have wrote sooner they all say they will sign a release if it can be done Legal Ira thinks it would be difficult to arrange it for Elijah and Thomas Hutchinsons heirs if you feel justified in releasing him on such terms send me a form that will suit you and I will try to get them all to sign it.

times is rather hard here at this time Money is scarce most every thing that the farmer has to sell is low there is a better prospect at this time in consequence of new gold discoveries east of the cascades mountains, wheat has raised from 60 cts per bushel to one dollar and there is a great demand for pack Horses if every body goes that talks of going there will not be many men left — there is a moth excitement here that is even painful to talk about I mean the rebellion going on against the best government that the sun ever shined on a large majority of the People of Oregon are for the Union but there is a class of men



# Butler Family Letters

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Title: Letter to Sister from Isaac and Margaret Smith (Bridgeport, Polk County)

Date: December 29, 1861

Transcription:

Bridgeport Polk Co December the 29th, 1861

Dear Sister

Time dose not make me forget that I have but one sister in a distant land and that death has deprived us of all our near relations and circumstances has seperated us maybe for always I hope not notwithstanding we have a great consolation that is we can write to each other and learn how we are geting along This leaves us all well. the three oldest boy is going to school at Monmouth thay are all at home now a takeing Christmas thay have grown up to be qite large boys Flora A is about as large as her mother the rest of the children is fat and hearty runing round the Home The snow will make you think that we have winter here as well as in illinois. it snowed about 3 inches deep a week ago it freeses in the knight and thaws in day time we have had a great deal more rain here this winter than usal the willamate has bin ten feet higher than ever known by white man it done a great deal of damage. Some say a million of dollar woldent [won't] make up the loss the gretest damage was done to towns on the river some was entirely swep away a good many farms buildings and stock was washed off and stock drowned thay was some lives lost not a grat many that we have heard of a great many had hare bredth escapes some staid is tree tops a day and knight and a raining all the time thare suffering must have bin great there is a great many entirely desitute thay will have to depend on their neighbors for help. I think you had better take a notion to come and see us it is no trick to cross the plains in good company we have plenty to ware and eat and apples with out end besides I think you could injoy your self I must come to a close and write some to John You must write soon

your Brother & Sister unto death

Isaac & Margaret Smith

[Continuation of letter]

Dear Brother

I have bin expecting to get a letter from you for a long time but I am disapointed I am so carless I must not complain this leaves us all well The Connecion are all well as fair as I know except Alexander davidson he has bin sick about a year he is able to be about part of the time the complaint the Doctors say is the gravel he suffers a great deal. Your mother was well the last I heard from her she has not bin here for about two months she looked well and hearty and seemed in good spirits she complais about you all not writing to here oftener. you requested me to see all of the heirs and see if thay was willing to release William for one years rent on the old place it was some time before I could see them all or I should have wrote sooner thay all say thay will sign a release if it can be don legal Ira thinks it would be difficult to arrange it for Elijah and Thomas Hutchinsons heirs if you feel justified in releaseing him on such terms send me a form that will suit you and I will try to get them all to sign it.

times is rather hard here at this time money is scarce most every thing that the farmer has to sell is low thare is a better prospect at this time in consequence of new gold disccoveries east of the cascades mountains. wheat has raised from 50 cts per bushel to one dollar and thare is a great demand for pack horses if every body goes that talks of going thare will not be many men left thare is a excitement here that is ever painful to talk about I mean the rebellion going on agaist the best goverment that the sun ever shined on a large majority of the people of Oregon are for the Union but thare is a class of men here that stiles them selves peace democrats that are opposed to the war and always talking about its unconstitutionality and say the people of the south cant be conqered such stuff is all moonshine and proceeds from a traitors heart, if we have a goverment at all (which I believe we have) it is able to put down all internal strifes and rebellions let them come from North or South if it cant lets change our form of goverment to one that can. I think it is high time for all union men to thrw away party policticks and put thare sholder to the government wheel as one man and never stop rolling it on till the stars and stripes waves over evry foot of soil within these United States and Territorys and say like old Hickry the Union must and shall be preserved. thay are triing to rais rigement of soldiers in Oregon I am afrid thy will be botherd in consequence of so many being at the mines and going I had made up mi mind to stop the Monmouth Review on acount of his opposition to the war but the last no that I got changed its tone and says it is in faver of prossicuteing the war with vigar till pece is conqerd that good doctrine. I must come to a close write soon

your brother & sister

Isaac and Margaret Smith